

THAI STORY

FROM ROYAL BEGINNINGS TO LOYAL ASIAN GAMES HOST

OCA Executive Board meets in Turkmenistan
OCA President presents Merit Awards
OCA Standing Committees confirmed



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FRONT COVER:

Thais on the rise, demonstrating
their skills at the Asian Beach
Games

SPORTS WORLD FACES MAJOR CHANGES

The 60th OCA Executive Board meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on October 16 gave long-serving members the chance to renew acquaintances and also to get to know the new members who joined us for the first time since the General Assembly in July.

It was a good opportunity to look back on the achievements of the past four years, but, more importantly, to assess the work that lies ahead in the next cycle through to 2015.

We will be hosting around 16 events in the next four years, including our various Games and major meetings, and I am confident that, with our different duties, we can continue to move forward thanks to the experience that exists within the Executive Board.

It is also important to note that there will be a lot of changes at the top of world sport in the next four years. These include the appointment of a new IOC President, new International Federation Presidents and a new President of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC).

With all the changes taking place we have to be very close to these organisations and have good cooperation with the other continents to make sure that Asia has a fair share of representation in the different organisations.

With our new Executive Board in place and getting down to business, I am confident we can meet all the challenges and changes that lie ahead.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah

President, Olympic Council of Asia



SPORTING ASIA LOOKS AHEAD TO 2012

This 13th edition of Sporting Asia (December 2011) marks the end of the third year of the OCA's official newsletter.

Starting as an eight-page publication in 2009 to mark the 1st OCA Sports Scientific Congress in Kuwait and the Inauguration Ceremony of the new OCA HQ, Sporting Asia quickly expanded to 32 pages due to the volume of OCA and NOC activities around the continent.

As we look ahead to the fourth year of Sporting Asia, the 2012 London Olympics will play a major part in our coverage, as will the OCA's 3rd Asian Beach Games in Haiyang, China, from June 16-22.

Plans for Sporting Asia 14 (March 2012) include reports from the 26th South East Asian Games in Palembang and Jakarta, Indonesia, and from the IOC's inaugural Winter Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck, Austria.

Plus regular features such as President's Message, News Digest, Inside the OCA, Games updates, news and sport from the 45 NOCs, OCA Diary and Sponsors' Club. See you in 2012!



Read all about the 26th SEA Games in the next Sporting Asia

‘QUEEN’ YU NA TO LIGHT UP WINTER YOG

There was no doubting the star of the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010: figure skating queen Kim Yu Na.

The Korean golden girl will now be on hand to inspire the next generation of Winter Olympians after being named by the IOC as an Ambassador for the inaugural Winter Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck, Austria, in January 2012.

Kim, 21, commented: “I am delighted and honoured to be a Winter Youth Olympic Games Ambassador. The Youth Olympic Games are an exceptional event and I am excited to be part of the first ever winter edition.”

“Having competed as an athlete since a very young age, I can relate to the participants of Innsbruck 2012 and I hope I can share my knowledge, passion and experience to motivate them to reach their potential.”

IOC President Jacques Rogge is delighted to have Kim on board.

“To have such a dedicated, gifted and internationally renowned athlete to mentor the athletes going to Innsbruck 2012 is fantastic news,” Rogge said.

“Yu Na is an outstanding Olympic champion, setting a new world record in winning her gold medal in Vancouver last year. She was excellent in her role as PyeongChang 2018 Athlete Ambassador, and I am sure that as a Youth Olympic Games Ambassador she will inspire young people to compete in winter sports.”

Scheduled to take place from January 13-22, the Innsbruck Winter Youth Olympic Games will attract over 1,000 top athletes between the ages of 15 and 18 from 65 countries. The Games will feature 63 events in seven sports and will also include a Culture and Education Programme.



Winter YOG Ambassador Kim Yu Na is pictured with Games mascot Yoggi.

THAI SPORT RALLIES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Sports officials in Thailand joined in the relief efforts for victims of the severe flooding that caused havoc across the kingdom.

The Sports Authority of Thailand - the sports ministry of the Royal Thai Government - offered its offices and sports stadiums to evacuees when floodwaters hit the capital, pouring over sand-bagged barriers protecting Bangkok's second airport and forcing a halt to commercial flights.

Together with the National Olympic Committee of Thailand, the SAT hosted the Olympic Solidarity/OCA Regional Forum 2011 on Preparation for the London Olympic Games in Phuket on October 21-22.

All staff, including Mr. Kanokphand Chulakasem, Sports Authority of Thailand Governor, immediately started aid relief work on their return to Bangkok on Monday, October 24.

A 2,000-capacity evacuation centre came into operation on October 25 and a canteen offered 1,000 victims from the flooded areas food, water and other basic necessities.

The sports stadiums also played an important role in easing the impact of the natural disaster. The Rajamangal National Stadium opened its doors to all evacuees to take part in jogging and other exercises in order to relieve the stress, tension and psychological pressure brought on by the devastating floods.

BEIJING HOSTS SPORT FOR ALL WORLD CONFERENCE

Three years after the spectacular success of the Beijing Olympic Games, China's capital welcomed the global Olympic family once again for the 14th World Conference on Sport for All at the China National Convention Centre from September 21-23.

The three-day conference came to a successful conclusion with 527 participants from around the world issuing a call to action in a unanimously approved final declaration.

The declaration was tabled by IOC Sport for All Commission Chairman Sam Ramsamy, and called on sports and non-sports organisations such as government, the health sector, schools and corporations to embrace the spirit of Sport for All and promote participation by all sectors of society in sport and physical activity.

"We have had a really excellent World Conference," said IOC President Jacques Rogge.

"Our hope is that when you go back to your respective cities and countries you will be able to implement on the ground what you have learnt or discovered during this conference."

The conference was hosted by the Chinese Olympic Committee and the Beijing Municipal Government and organised by the IOC and Beijing Olympic City Development Association.

 The IOC's Sport for All Commission awarded a grant for the development and promotion of Sport for All to: Health Qigong Administrative Centre of the General Administration of Sport of China and the Chinese Health Qigong Association.



Enjoying Sport For All

DOHA JOINS TOKYO IN RACE FOR 2020 OLYMPICS

The International Olympic Committee announced on September 2 that six cities have been put forward by their respective National Olympic Committees to apply to host the 2020 Olympic Games. The deadline was September 1.

The cities, in alphabetical order, are: Baku (Azerbaijan), Doha (Qatar), Istanbul (Turkey), Madrid (Spain), Rome (Italy) and Tokyo (Japan). The 2020 host city will be decided at the 125th IOC Session in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on September 7, 2013.

The application of Doha will be assessed on dates within the range proposed by the Qatar Olympic Committee - September 20 to October 20 - and accepted, in principle, by the IOC EB at its meeting in Daegu, Korea, in August.

While accepting the proposal in principle, the EB specifically asked the Qatar NOC for full assurances on the following points:

1. In order to protect the health of the athletes, the IOC will publish a list of events which must be organised at the most appropriate time determined by the IOC (early morning/late afternoon).
2. This scheduling should not be detrimental to the organisation, the broadcast coverage or the spectator experience.
3. Measures should be taken to protect the health of the public and all technical and support staff.



The winning photo from India

CALCUTTA PHOTO WINS OLYMPIC AWARD

The Olympic Museum in Lausanne announced the results of the HOPE photo competition on October 20, the International Day of Peace.

The competition was launched in spring and first prize was awarded to «sudiptopix» (India) for his photo Women's Empowerment, which shows a Muslim woman playing football in a park in Calcutta, India.

The jury particularly appreciated this urban sporting scene, offering a vision of sport as a unifying element, bringing joy to those who play it and demolishing prejudices.

The competition winner will visit Lausanne as part of an exclusive four-day programme. He will also receive photographic equipment worth 2,000 Euros from IOC TOP Partner Panasonic.

PALESTINE, ISRAEL CONTINUE COOPERATION

A third joint meeting between the IOC and NOCs of Israel and Palestine was held in Ramallah on October 27 to review the progress of earlier decisions and to decide the next steps.

Regarding the free movement of Palestinian athletes, coaches, officials and sports equipment inside and outside the Palestinian territories, as well as of visiting foreign sports delegations, including athletes, all parties recognised the significant results achieved thanks to the "hotline" set up between the two NOCs in May.

The parties also discussed the IOC-supported plan for the development of sport in the Palestinian territories, for which initial funding was provided by the IOC and the Olympic Council of Asia.

In addition, the IOC and Olympic Solidarity continue to provide the best possible assistance to the NOC of Palestine, in particular for the preparation of athletes aiming to compete at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Lastly, all parties welcomed the efforts and progress made by the International Mediterranean Games Committee for the participation of the NOCs of Israel and Palestine at the next Mediterranean Games. The next joint meeting will take place in Tel Aviv.


IN OTHER NEWS:

 The PyeongChang Organising Committee for the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games has been officially launched with the inaugural meeting of its General Assembly in Seoul.

Kim Jin Sun, former Governor of Gangwon Province, was elected President and Chief Executive Officer of POCOG. The Assembly also approved the nomination of Moon Dong Hoo as its Vice President and Secretary General.

 The IOC's Coordination Commission for the second Youth Olympic Games in 2014 concluded its second visit to Nanjing, China, on October 28.

Several milestones have been achieved since the first visit in January 2011, including the launch of the vibrant Nanjing 2014 emblem, the initiation of the marketing programme, the finalisation of the Culture and Education Programme concepts and the laying of the foundations of the Youth Olympic Village to accommodate 5,900 athletes and team officials. Furthermore, 25 venues for the 28 sports have been confirmed.

 The Olympic Council of Asia's Olympasia Project has awarded Bhutan Olympic Committee US\$100,000 towards the cost of building a multi-purpose sports hall on 1.45 acres of land in Trashigang, eastern Bhutan. The hall will be named Trashigang OCA Multi-Sports Hall and is expected to be completed by October 2012.

The ground-breaking ceremony took place on September 9 and was presided over by the Umzee of the Trashigang Dzongkhag.



A royal occasion at Bahrain 11

BAHRAIN 11 WRITES NEW CHAPTER IN GCC SPORT



The inaugural Gulf Cooperation Council Games – Bahrain 11 – concluded on Saturday, October 22, with a 3-1 victory for Bahrain over Saudi Arabia in the football final. The match was attended by Bahrain Olympic Committee President H.H. Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, who presented the gold medals to the winning team.

Bahrain 11, which ran from October 11-22, involved 1,500 athletes from the six GCC countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

They competed in 10 sports: football, basketball, volleyball,

handball, athletics, swimming, cycling, bowling, table tennis for women and goalball.

At the final medal count, Kuwait took home the highest number of gold medals with 27, followed by Bahrain with 10 and Qatar with seven. In the total medals tally, Kuwait stayed on top with 48, followed by UAE with 31 and Saudi Arabia with 28.

Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, CEO of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, told the closing press conference: “Bahrain 11 represents a turning point in the history of Bahrain in terms of showcasing the Kingdom’s capabilities in organising such significant sporting events. The event has truly exceeded our expectations.”

The second GCC Games will be hosted by Saudi Arabia in four years’ time. (www.bahrain11.com)

HAMBANTOTA HOSTS BEACH GAMES



Beach Games fever spread to South Asia when Sri Lanka staged the inaugural South Asian Beach Games from October 8-14 at Hambantota – a candidate city to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Around 500 athletes and officials from eight NOCs - Afghanistan,

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - competed in 10 sports: equestrian, marathon swimming, beach basketball, beach kabaddi, life saving, beach soccer,

windsurfing, beach handball, beach volleyball and beach netball. India finished on top of the medals table with 11 gold, nine silver and seven bronze, followed by Sri Lanka with nine gold, 10 silver and nine bronze. Pakistan was third with five gold, two silver and four bronze medals.

H.E. Mahinda Rajapakse, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was chief guest at the opening ceremony, while this honour fell to the Hon. Chamal Rajapakse, Speaker of the Parliament, at the closing ceremony.

The 2nd South Asian Beach Games will be held in the Maldives in 2013. (www.srilankaolympic.org)

ASHGABAT WELCOMES OCA EXECUTIVE BOARD

With its colourful domes and white marble buildings gleaming in the bright autumnal sunshine, its immaculately clean streets and fountain-filled parks, Ashgabat provided an exotic location for the 60th OCA Executive Board meeting.

The capital of Turkmenistan is well known as an ancient trading post on the Great Silk Road, and this time brought together Asia's sports leaders for the start of a new chapter in OCA history.

"We are very happy to be gathering in this beautiful city of Ashgabat as Turkmenistan prepares to celebrate its 20th anniversary of independence," commented the OCA President, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, at the start of the Sunday session.

"I would like to welcome our new EB members who are gathered with us for the first time since the General Assembly in Tokyo. They will add value to our organisation. With your support, unity and commitment we can achieve our goals."

Sheikh Ahmad expressed his sincere thanks to the President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, who was represented by the Deputy Prime Minister and Senior Vice President of the Turkmenistan NOC, Deryageldi Orazov.

Reading out a speech from President Gurbanguly, the Deputy Prime Minister congratulated the OCA on the occasion of its 60th EB meeting and said the gathering would help to strengthen friendship, cooperation and brotherhood.

"The OCA is one of the biggest international organisations in the world. The fact that the OCA has awarded the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games to Ashgabat in 2017 means that our sports policy has been recognised by the international community. We are always ready to cooperate with the OCA," he said.

The speech drew a standing ovation from the gathering, after which Sheikh Ahmad praised the "wise and strong leadership" in the country.



The 60th OCA Executive Board meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

EB DECISIONS ON HAIYANG 2012, NANJING 2013

☀ The age limit for the 2nd Asian Youth Games in Nanjing, China, in 2013 will be one year younger than for the 2nd Youth Olympic Games at Nanjing in 2014, enabling Asian athletes to benefit from their experience of 2013 the following year. The age limit for the IOC's YOG is 15-18.

☀ The venue for the 61st EB meeting, in February or March next year, will be determined by correspondence. Several NOCs want to host the meeting, including Syria and Iran.

☀ Waterski/wakeboard has been officially added to the programme for the 3rd Asian Beach Games in Haiyang, China, in June 2012, increasing the number of sports to 13 and events to 49.

☀ The 62nd EB meeting will take place in Haiyang, China, on the sidelines of the 3rd Asian Beach Games from June 16-22, 2012.



The MoU signing ceremony takes place in Ashgabat.

OCA SIGNS MOU FOR 5TH CHILDREN OF ASIA GAMES

The Olympic Council of Asia signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the organisers of the 5th Children of Asia Games 2012 (Yakutia) at the start of the 60th OCA Executive Board meeting.

Joining the OCA President, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, at the signing ceremony were Bariev Marat, General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Russian Olympic Committee, and Dmitry E. Glushko, Vice President of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) in the Russian Federation.

The MoU guaranteed the official support of the OCA and its 45 NOCs for the 5th Children of Asia International Sports Games, which will take place from July 4-16, 2012, in the cities of

Yakutsk, Mirny and Neryungri of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia). The inaugural Children of Asia Games were held in Yakutsk in 1996 and were dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games.

The previous four Games welcomed over 5,000 youngsters from more than 20 countries of Asia and 27 regions of Russia. Yakutia is known for its mineral resources, nature and unique culture. Its territory is five times larger than France and 13 times larger than Great Britain.

OCA Vice President Gafur-Arslonbek Rakhimov, who led an OCA delegation on a four-day site visit in September, will represent the OCA in all matters relating to the Games.

IRAN NOC PRESIDENT DECLARES FULL SUPPORT FOR OCA

New OCA Vice President Mohammad Ali Abadi used the platform of his first Executive Board meeting to pledge his full support to the OCA President, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah.

The President of NOC Iran said it was a "great honour and pleasure" to attend his first EB meeting as OCA Vice President following his appointment at the OCA General Assembly in July.

"I hereby confirm that the NOC of the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to actively join all OCA executive and educational activities and plans," he said.

"The National Olympic and Paralympic Committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran is also ready to organise any training and educational courses approved by the OCA's respectful members."

Mr Abadi offered Tehran as a venue for an OCA Executive Board meeting or General Assembly in the near future.



OCA Vice President Mohammad Ali Abadi



The OCA President is received by the President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, on Monday, October 17.



OCA Merit Award to the Mayor of Almaty, Akhmetzhan Yessimov.



OCA Merit Award to the Mayor of Astana, Imangali Tasmagambetov.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK FOR OCA PRESIDENT

A presidential visit in the grandest of settings...a prestigious award to a city mayor...top-level talks with a government sports minister...it's all in a day's work if you happen to be President of the Olympic Council of Asia.

For H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, his journey to Central Asia for the 60th OCA Executive Board meeting in Turkmenistan on October 16 was only half the story.

Calling in at Almaty, Kazakhstan, en route to Ashgabat, Sheikh Ahmad presented the Mayor of Almaty, Akhmetzhan Yessimov, with the OCA Merit Award on Friday, October 14.

The following day, the OCA President decorated the Mayor of Astana, Imangali Tasmagambetov, with the same award.

The honours were bestowed on the civic leaders for their contribution towards the success of the 7th Asian Winter Games 2011 in terms of planning, organisation and venue construction.

Sheikh Ahmad also presented the OCA Gold Pin to the Vice Mayor of Almaty, Serik Sedumanov, and held meetings with sports and tourism ministers and Olympic chiefs from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

On Monday, October 17, Sheikh Ahmad was received by the President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

Emphasising that the State of Kuwait was very keen to strengthen friendly cooperation with Turkmenistan, Sheikh Ahmad conveyed the greetings of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, to the President, along with an invitation for a state visit.

A focus of the meeting was the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games which Ashgabat will host in 2017. Noting that construction work had already started on an Olympic sports complex, the Turkmen leader said Turkmenistan would apply every effort to guarantee the success of the event.

WINNING THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN

In the second of our series with Asia's Sports Leaders, Sporting Asia meets **Natalya Sipovich**, one of the most popular members of the OCA Executive Board and Chair of the OCA Women and Sports Committee.

Sporting Asia: Which sports did you play in your youth?

Natalya Sipovich: Figure skating. When I was in the first class of elementary school my parents asked me which sport I would like to take up: figure skating, diving or gymnastics. The venues were all close to my home in Almaty. Figure skating was very popular at the time.

What are your favourite sports now?

I love many kinds of sport. As a woman I appreciate the beauty, the technical excellence and physical strength of sports such as gymnastics, figure skating, athletics, swimming and cycling. I am very glad that dance sport is in the OCA programme.

I love very much team sports such as hockey, football, basketball, water polo and volleyball. In team competitions we can see not only the physical ability of the athletes but team spirit, the solidarity of the players and finally game intelligence.

PROFILE

Name Natalya Sipovich

NOC Kazakhstan

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Age 56

Entry in the OCA 2003

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Natalya Sipovich is greeted warmly in Turkmenistan



A breakthrough for Saudi Arabian women



OCA Executive Board member Natalya Sipovich

Describe your role as Chair of the OCA Women and Sport Committee.

The committee was created in 2003 and consists of very intelligent and strong ladies from around Asia. My role is to lead and coordinate the committee, and to implement the policies and strategies decided by the OCA and the OCA Women and Sport Committee with the purpose of increasing the number of women available for leadership positions.

How much progress have you made?

The percentage of female athletes at the Asian Games, Winter Games, Indoor Games and Beach Games has grown. The percentage of events for women has grown. The number of women in the delegations, as administrators, team officials, chef de mission, doctors and journalists, has increased also.

Do you remember last year when Ms Dalma Rushdi Malhas from Saudi Arabia won her bronze medal in the individual jumping competition of the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore? In my opinion this is also progress because it gives hope for more female athletes from Arab countries to take part in future international sporting events.

These days there are a lot of women in the General Assembly hall representing their NOCs, Sports Federations and Games Organising Committees compared to a few years ago.

What are the biggest challengers for your committee?

To reach the IOC goal of having at least 20% of all policy-making boards in sport comprised of women we need to "destroy" the imbalance of political and economic development in the world and to raise the social development and education standards in a certain number of Asian countries.

Religious and traditional customs, the male mentality, discrimination in the media of Asian sports...these are the main factors restricting the development of women's sport in Asia. Our committee knows these barriers and tries to overcome them.

In recent years many Asian NOCs have supported our recommendations and followed them by participating in continental, regional and national seminars, workshops and conferences so that women throughout Asia can share experiences and ideas as well as develop expertise in sports policy for their own NOC and National Sports Federations.



Dr Rita Subowo is an inspiration for Natalya Sipovich



Natalya Sipovich greets the OCA President in Tokyo

Women and Sport was one of the main themes of the 1st OCA Sports Congress in Kuwait in 2009. What impact did this have?

It gave us a new vision and new strategy. I am proud to note the progress of the NOCs of Hong Kong, Jordan, Malaysia, India, Nepal, Mongolia, Iran, Qatar, Thailand, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Laos, DPR Korea and their Women and Sport Committees.

What is the progress in the Gulf region?

The 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, involved thousands of girls and women as athletes, administrators, journalists and volunteers, with the assistance of the Qatar Women and Sport Committee. At present we note the huge movement of this association and in general in the women's sport activity in the Gulf. The GCC Women's Organising Committee was established in 2007 and this is another big step forward.

What can you and your committee do to change things?

We need all NOCs in Asia to set up their own Women and Sport Committee so they can promote and increase the participation

of women at all levels of sport. We must increase the applications for Olympic Solidarity funding and other support from the IOC and OCA. In general we must be more active and creative.

What is your dream for the OCA Women and Sport Committee?

I have noticed that women are interested in working in all aspects of NOCs and Sports Federations and are not interested in working exclusively on issues relating to women. Perhaps it is time for the greater involvement of men in the Women and Sport Committees and in the promotion of women.

Who inspires you in your work?

Thanks to the Olympic Movement, in 17 years I have had the opportunity to meet my colleagues from five continents. Some of them serve as a guiding light for me: Gunilla Lindberg, ANOC Secretary General, IOC Member; Anita DeFrantz, Chairperson of the IOC Women and Sport Commission; Rita Subowo, IOC Member, OCA EB Member, President of NOC Indonesia. These ladies are beautiful, pioneering, generous, vigorous, capable and well qualified.



The venue tour calls in at the stadium for the opening and closing ceremony.

HAIYANG HOSTS CDM SEMINAR

More than 100 delegates from National Olympic Committees and other observers converged on Haiyang, China, in early September for the Chefs de Mission Seminar for the 3rd Asian Beach Games in June 2012.

After a lively and informal outdoor reception on the evening of Monday, September 5, the main business took place the following day with a venue tour, CDM Seminar, official press conference attended by more than 20 mainstream domestic media and finally the banquet.

Organisers crammed a lot of information into a short period of time, and the delegates headed for home with a clear impression of the Games operations and deadlines and the compact venues along the Yellow Sea coast in Shandong province.

The comments of United Arab Emirates representative Abdelme-

lik M. Al Jani summed up the mood of the delegates.

"The Chinese have had a lot of experience recently with the Olympic Games in Beijing and the Asian Games in Guangzhou, so they know how to organise a major championship," he said.

"It is a very good idea to invite everyone here one year before the Beach Games because if there are any points of concern they have plenty of time to clear things up and make the tournament one of the best."

Representing the OCA, Sports Committee Chairman Zhang Jilong spoke of the rise in popularity of the Asian Beach Games, which were first held in 2008.

"The Beach Games have caught the imagination of the world and has now developed into a world-standard event," he said.



Turkmenistan NOC's Saparmamed Durdiev listens and learns



Elsa Luk (Macau NOC) takes another photo

Sports Programme

The addition of waterskiing takes the number of sports to 13. The other 12 are: beach volleyball, beach woodball, beach basketball 3 x 3, beach soccer, beach handball, powered paragliding, windsurfing, roller skating, beach kabaddi, sport climbing, beach sepaktakraw and dragon boat.

Accreditation Centres

Main Accreditation Centre, Games Village, open from June 1-23
Sub Accreditation Centres (3) at OCA HQ (Shenglongjianguo Hotel), Athletes' Village, Main Media Centre, June 8-23

Arrival/Departure

Official airport/seaport for arrival, departure and freight forwarding: Qingdao International Airport/Qingdao Port
February 1, 2012: Deadline for NOCs to return A/D forms to HABGOC
Official service provider: COSCO Logistics Co. Ltd, Qingdao

Delegation Registration Meetings

March 2012: Pre-DRMs
April 20: HABGOC will begin to send pre-valid cards to NOCs
June 8-15: DRMs in Haiyang
June 8: Pre-valid cards can be validated from this date

Sports Entry Deadlines

By Sport: May 15, 2011
By Number: February 29, 2012
By Name: April 30, 2012

Team Welcome Ceremony

June 12-15 and June 17 (if required): Flag Plaza, International Zone, Athletes' Village, within 48 hours of delegation's arrival

Accreditation

Opened: October 1, 2011
Closes: December 31, 2011
Categories: 17
Status: Card (ABGIAC) serves as multiple-entry, temporary China visa from May 20 to July 10, 2012. It includes entry to Hong Kong and Macau.

Athletes' Village

Three zones: Residential, International, Public
Comprises: 15 apartment blocks, 482 apartments, 2,000 beds
Pre-opening (two delegates per NOC): June 8
Official opening: June 12
Closes: June 25

Medical Services

Operation period: June 8-25

Doping Control

Operation period: June 12-22
DC stations: 10
Laboratory: China Anti-Doping Agency
Negative results: 24 hours
Positive results: 48 hours
EPO results: 72 hours

Cultural Events

Opening Ceremony: June 16
Closing Ceremony: June 22
Torch Relay: June 13-16
Online Torch Relay: March 9-June 11

Media/Broadcasting

Host Broadcaster: CCTV 5
Live broadcast of: Opening and Closing Ceremony, beach soccer, beach volleyball, beach sepaktakraw, beach handball, dragon boat, sport climbing.
Main Media Centre: Main Press Centre (1st Floor), International Broadcasting Centre (2nd-4th Floor). Total area: 4,400 square metres
Media Village: Opens, June 12; closes June 25
Accreditation (via NOC): Opens, October 1, 2011; closes, December 31, 2011

Official Hotels

OCA HQ (2): Shenglongjianguo Hotel, Aloft Hotel
Technical Officials: Ligong International Hotel
HABGOC staff/invited guests: Enjoy Sea Hotel
Total rooms: 1,600

POSTCARDS FROM HAIYANG



One of the countdown clocks in Haiyang, as dusk approaches



A tranquil scene on the shore of the Yellow Sea



Fishing boats wait for high tide



A typical seaside snapshot



The fishing net, as opposed to the Internet, is still the most important part of daily life for these local women of the sea.

- WISH YOU WERE HERE!



Beach soccer at the sand sculpture park



A relaxing location on the Haiyang sea front



The seafood comes in big portions in Haiyang

3rd Asian Beach Games

Haiyang, China: June 16-22, 2012



Sepaktakraw on Haiyang sea front

SUN, SEA, SAND AND SEPAKTAKRAW

Under a burning sun and in front of an excitable audience of local schoolchildren, the test event for beach sepaktakraw was held on Haiyang sea front on September 22-23.

Five men's teams took part in China's first National Beach Sepaktakraw Championship in conditions more resembling mid-summer than mid-autumn, and the agility and acrobatics of the athletes impressed spectators and media alike.

Haiyang City Vice Mayor Gao Jingtao hosted the opening ceremony on a glorious Thursday morning, and Haiyang

Municipal Government representative Jiang Xuening thanked all the participants, who numbered around 85 including players and technical staff.

In addition to the competition court and one practice court, the venue also included a medical area, technical officials' tent and other services to ensure the smooth organisation and running of the two-day championship.

Previous test events had been held in powered paragliding, roller skating, beach football and sport climbing.



HABGOC staff with souvenir mascots

FASHION AND PASSION

The headquarters of the Haiyang Asian Beach Games Organising Committee staged a fashion show and official merchandise display on Thursday, September 15, for HABGOC staff, licensed product manufacturers and other stakeholders.

With a stage and catwalk set up in the staff cafeteria, together with booths and kiosks displaying the various products, a series of promotional events took place to showcase the official uniforms for staff and a host of souvenirs for sale to the public.

The items ranged from coins and stamps to traditional Chinese tea sets and finally to the uniforms, T-shirts, caps and other accessories, including travel mugs and even manicure sets.



Typically Thailand - always a popular team in multi-sports events.

THAI STORY

In the latest of Sporting Asia's NOC Spotlight feature, we turn the focus on the National Olympic Committee of Thailand.

With its central location for West and East Asia, its international transport network and its readiness to host major events, meetings and other sports activities, Thailand has become a leading player in the Olympic movement at regional, continental and world levels.

In an interview with the NOC President, General Yuthasak Sasiprapha, Sporting Asia looks back on Thailand's rich history as an OCA host and looks forward to its next big test: the 4th Asian Beach Games on the island of Phuket in 2014.

We also learn how the SEA Games giant is trying to close the gap on the Big Three of China, Korea and Japan at the top of the Asian Games medal table – and it's all a matter of science!



PROFILE

NOC: National Olympic Committee of Thailand

Established: June 20, 1948

Royal Patronage granted: December 26, 1949

IOC recognition: May 15, 1950

Olympic Games debut: Helsinki 1952

President: General Yuthasak Sasiprapha

Secretary General/Vice President: Major General Charouck Arirachakaran

NOCT Commissions: 16

National Sports Associations: 64 (36 supervised by NOCT)

Address: 226, Ban Ampawan, Sri Ayudhya Road,
Wachira, Dusit,
Bangkok 10300, Thailand.

Telephone: (662) 0 2281 1035

Fax: (662) 0 2280 3758

Email: postmaster@olympicthai.or.th

Website: www.olympicthai.or.th



Beautiful Phuket will host the 2014 Asian Beach Games



OCA Vice President Maj. Gen. Charouck Arirachakaran

THAILAND – A ROYAL AND LOYAL



General Yuthasak Sasiprapha, President, NOC Thailand;
Hon. Life President, SEA Games Federation.

Under the royal patronage of the King, the National Olympic Committee of Thailand has proved to be a loyal and trusted friend and servant of the Olympic Council of Asia.

When it comes to hosting major OCA events, Thailand stands proudly as the only NOC to have staged four editions of the showpiece Asian Games, in 1966, 1970, 1978 and 1998. That's 25 per cent of the 16 Asian Games held so far, testimony to the organisational skills and the passion for sport that exists in the kingdom.

In addition to this, Thailand showed its pioneering side by hosting the inaugural editions of two more OCA multi-sports events: the 1st Asian Indoor Games in 2005 and the 1st Asian Martial Arts Games in 2009.

Next up for NOC Thailand is the 4th Asian Beach Games 2014 in the tourist paradise of Phuket, so there can be no doubting the Thais' continued commitment to developing their own sports culture and infrastructure while promoting the Olympic spirit throughout the continent.

"We are sure the Asian Beach Games in Phuket will be a very



Thai athletes celebrate more gold



General Bancha Marinpong, Director, NOC Thailand, Presidential Office, admires the "Wall of Fame" at HQ.

NOC IN THE SOUTH EAST ASIA ZONE

special occasion for Thailand and for the OCA," says General Yuthasak Sasiprapha, NOC Thailand President, during an interview with Sporting Asia in his Bangkok office.

"We have a lot of experience hosting major games for the OCA and also in the South East Asia region over many years. We want to use this experience to make a Beach Games that everyone will remember, not only for the natural beauty of the island of Phuket but also for the friendly atmosphere we can create through the different sports.

"We have already set up two levels of organisation – an executive committee and organising committee – and we have a budget in place from central and local government and from sponsors. The governor of Phuket is ready to give his full support and do everything possible for the success of the 4th Asian Beach Games."

Despite its reputation as the Land of Smiles, don't be fooled by the charming social customs and etiquette of the local people, as a fierce pride and energy burns inside the Thai athlete.

At the highest level of sport, Thailand has won 21 medals at the

Olympic Games, comprising seven gold, four silver and 10 bronze. Of the 21 medals, 13 have come from boxing, six in weightlifting and two in taekwondo. Shooting (skeet and trap) is a big medal hope for London 2012.

At the Asian Games level, Thailand ranks in the 5th-7th place bracket, and is striving to close the gap on the Big Three of China, Korea and Japan.

"We think the difference lies in sports science and the facilities and technology that are available at the top level," continues General Yuthasak.

"The Thailand Olympic Committee is talking to the Ministry of Sport about ways to develop our sports science and close the gap on the top nations in Asia. At the moment our sports science facilities are scattered around in universities, hospitals and research and development institutes.

"They are not united as a single organisation, and we really need one central sports science facility to enhance the proficiency of the athletes. It is a hot issue with the government!"



100 GOLD MEDALS AT 2013 AIMAG

From the Cha Cha Cha to Chess, and from Baduk to Backstroke, the 4th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games at Incheon, Korea, in 2013 will have something for everyone.

Organisers revealed the detailed sports programme of "AIMAG4" to the 60th OCA Executive Board meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on October 16, and the nine-sport, 100-event indoor festival was approved.

A late request for the addition of indoor athletics will be considered, but organisers explained that a suitable arena for track and field did not exist in Incheon, or even in the nearby Korean capital of Seoul.

The nine approved sports, with the number of events, are:

- 1: Billiard Sports (10)
- 2: Bowling (6)
- 3: Chess (4)-Baduk (4) and Electronic Sports (6)
- 4: Dance Sport (10)
- 5: Futsal (2)
- 6: Kabaddi (2)
- 7: Kickboxing (9) and Muay (9)
- 8: Kurash (8)
- 9: Short Course (25m) Swimming (30)

Other key dates, facts and figures:

Games time: June 29 to July 6, 2013 (eight days)

Participants: 45 NOCs; approximately 4,500 participants including athletes, officials and media.

Slogan, mascots and emblem: The slogan, Diversity Shines Here, and the three mascots will be the same for AIMAG 2013 and the 17th Asian Games in 2014. AIMAG 2013 will have a new emblem featuring the OCA motto, Ever Onward, and the characteristics of host city Incheon.

Competition venues: Nine (seven existing, two new venues for swimming and futsal)

Training venues: Five

Opening and Closing Ceremony venue: Samsan World Gymnasium

3rd OCA-IAGOC Coordination Committee meeting: November 15-17, 2011, Songdo, Incheon

Athletes' Village: Local university halls of residence

Transportation: 600 vehicles

Volunteers: 3,000. Recruitment begins September 2012

Main Media Centre: Songdo Convensia, MMC for Asian Games 2014



Dance sport will offer 10 gold medals at Incheon 2013



Hawaiian dance in Phuket

ROBOTS AND FRIENDS PROMOTE INCHEON ASIAN GAMES

Dancing robots, a baby elephant, Hawaiian dancers...an exotic cast of extras and entertainers helped to promote the 17th Asian Games during the latest promotional fun runs staged by Incheon 2014 organising committee IAGOC.

The eye-catching performers were all part of the festive sideshows at the Dubai and Phuket fun runs held in conjunction with the Olympic Solidarity/OCA Regional Forums 2011.

The seventh in the series of fun runs was hosted by UAE NOC at Dubai Al Mamzar beach on Tuesday, October 18, and attracted more than 400 boys and girls from several schools in Dubai.

Not even the afternoon temperatures of 37 C could melt the passion of the competitors, who were rewarded with a fun run certificate at the finish line. The top nine in each section also received a medal.

As part of IAGOC's Korean Culture Programme, six mini-robots

performed Korean pop culture to the delight of the local students and media alike, highlighting the extraordinary boom in domestic production, sales and exports in this high-tech industry.

"The robot dancing show is our first experiment and it will give us more experience about how IAGOC can further promote the Incheon Asian Games in the future," said IAGOC's Deputy Secretary General for Games Operations, Su Jung Ghyu.

The fun run series moved to Phuket, Thailand, for the eighth leg at Patong Beach on Friday, October 21. NOC Thailand raised the profile of the event significantly with the presence of colourful Thai martial arts, an elephant show and a Hawaiian dance performance.

Fifty VIP guests from the OS/OCA Regional Forum joined in the 1.8km fun run together with more than 600 students from local schools.



A baby elephant joins in the fun at Phuket



The dancing robots are the centre of attention in Dubai

45 NOCs

News and sports round-up



Afghanistan

An inauguration ceremony was held to mark the end of a three-year construction project to build a sports stadium in the eastern province of Khost, reports Afghanistan Online. The stadium was built at a cost of more than US\$1 million and has a capacity of 20,000. Several different sports can be held there, including football and cricket. (www.afghan-web.com)



Bahrain

Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary General Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani lauded Bahrain's success in hosting the inaugural GCC Games (Bahrain 11), which was held under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa from October 11-22.

He said in a statement to Bahrain News Agency that the success of the Games was a step forward for the GCC, and commended the tremendous efforts exerted by the kingdom as well as the facilities provided by the Bahrain Olympic Committee under the presidency of Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa. (www.bna.bh)



Bangladesh

Bangladesh won the gold medal in beach football at the 1st South Asian Beach Games in Hambantota, Sri Lanka, beating the host team in the final. Shri Polas Chowdhury won a silver medal in the "Run-Swim-Run" event of the life saving discipline, and the Bangladeshi women won a bronze in beach kabaddi. Under Chef de Mission Showkat Ali Khan, Bangladesh's 29-strong delegation competed in football, kabaddi, swimming and life saving.

(Article supplied by: Col (Retd) M. Wali Ullah, Director General, Bangladesh Olympic Association)



Bhutan

The Bhutan Olympic Committee celebrated Olympic Day 2011 at Sherubtse College, Trashigang, on September 11. The festivities involved over 3,000 people and began with a tree-planting ceremony followed by a 6-km run. Fifteen sports federations joined in the celebrations.



A tokha (lunch) was provided to all participants, and the day ended with a friendly football game between BOC officials and Sherubtse College lecturers.



Brunei Darussalam

National athletics coach Isidrol Del Prado and national swim coach Eric Landa lauded the Brunei Darussalam National Olympic Council for securing two London 2012 Olympic Scholarships for hurdler Maziah Mahusin and swimmer Anderson Lim Chee Wei. The athletes will each receive US\$1,000 a month to help with their training from September 2011 to August 2012. (www.bruneiolympic.org)



Cambodia

The National Olympic Committee of Cambodia received a donation of US\$4,000 per month for the training and daily expenses of athletes in the build-up to the London Olympic Games in 2012 from Mr Ikuo Konno, head of the Japanese Investment Company and deputy president of the Cambodia Karatedo School. A ceremony took place at NOCC HQ under the presidency of H.E. Nut Sa An, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and First Deputy President of NOCC. (www.camnoc.org)



China

The Chinese Olympic Committee and Hilton Worldwide have announced an eight-year hotel partnership agreement through to 2019 and taking in preparations for the 2012 London Olympic Games and 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. The partnership marks the first time a multinational hotel company has supported the COC and provides Hilton Worldwide with the distinction of being one of only two multinational sponsors for Team China after BMW Group. (www.olympic.cn)



DPR Korea

DPR Korea has committed to playing in an international table tennis tournament alongside Korea, according to a report by the Yonhap news agency in Seoul. Radio Free Asia said Pak Myong-chol, DPR Korea's minister of physical culture and sport, informed Adham Sharara, President of the International Table Tennis Federation, of DPR Korea's decision to play in the Peace and Sport Table Tennis Tournament during Sharara's visit to Pyongyang in October.



Hong Kong



Olympic values played a big part in the Te Aka Aorere mini-rugby tournament, which was held at King's Park sports ground to celebrate the start of the Rugby World Cup 2011 in New Zealand. The event was

hosted by the New Zealand Consulate-General, with the support of the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union and the Hong Kong Mini-Rugby Football Union.

Some 300 children participated, representing the 20 nations at the Rugby World Cup 2011. After intense competition, Scotland beat France in the final. Australia finished third and Ireland fourth. Ireland won the "Team with the Best Olympic Values" judged by Hong Kong national team player Anthony Haynes.



India

The Indian Olympic Association Secretary General Raja Randhir Singh paid tribute to the late former national team cricket captain Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, saying he would always be remembered for leading the Indian team to its first overseas series win, in New Zealand.

"He was an outstanding sportsman and a great human being. He will be deeply missed among the Indian sports fraternity," said Raja Randhir, the OCA Secretary General.



Indonesia

Indonesia NOC hosted two sports specialists from Australia: Dr Fadi Ma'ayah, a football expert from Edith Cowan University based in Perth, and Mr Hallam Pereira from the Western Australian Ministry of Sport. They made several presentations throughout the week including at the NOC offices for a number of the National Federations and also a presentation at the Australian Embassy.



The trip was funded through a Development of National Sporting Structures grant from Olympic Solidarity.

(Article courtesy of Dr Greg Wilson, PhD, Program Manager, Indonesian Olympic Committee. www.olympic.or.id)



Iran

OCA Director General and FINA Vice President Husain Al Musallam met with Dr. Mohamad Abbasi, the Youth & Sports Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Tehran on Sunday, October 2. Dr. Abbasi said Iranian sport would benefit from the visit of Captain Husain. "We are very happy to receive Husain Al Musallam, one of the most influential members of two of the most important international sports organisations in the world, FINA and OCA," said Dr. Abbasi.



NOC Secretary General and OCA Executive Board member Bahram Afsharzadeh and Iran Swimming Federation President Reza Jafari also attended the meeting.



Iraq

Iraq has given its full support to the Qatar Association of Athletics Federation's bid to host the 2017 IAAF World Championships in Doha. The Iraqi Athletics Federation said: "The Iraqi Athletics Federation has experienced first-hand how events are organised in Qatar and therefore fully supports the bid of Doha for the 2017 IAAF World Championships."



Japan



Japan's OCA Executive Board member Yuko Arakida took part in the 5th IOC Athletes' Forum in Colorado Springs, USA, recently, and handed out 30 DVDs of the Asian Athletes' Forum held in Tokyo on the sidelines of the OCA General Assembly in July. The DVD was well received by IOC members and International Federations, and another 45 DVDs have been produced for Asia's NOCs.



Jordan

The Jordan Olympic Committee has launched a Facebook Group and a Twitter account in a bid to reach out to all corners of the Kingdom. "The way people receive their information is changing rapidly and as a key national organisation we must ensure that we stay in touch," said Lana Al Jaghbeer, JOC Secretary General.

"Jordan has a very young and dynamic population and a large majority use Facebook and Twitter so we want to make sure that we are communicating with them." (www.joc.jo)

45 NOCs

News and sports round-up



(See Kuwait)



Kazakhstan

A delegation from the Kazakhstan Olympic Committee met with International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge at IOC HQ, Vidy, recently. According to the IOC's weekly news bulletin dated October 7, President Rogge hosted Kazakhstan NOC including President Temirkhan Dosmukhambetov and Secretary General Timur Dossymbetov. (www.olympic.org)



Korea

The Korean Olympic Committee signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Zealand Olympic Committee for future cooperation between the two sports powers. The signing ceremony took place at the Lotte Hotel Seoul on September 26 and involved KOC President Park Yong-Sung and NZOC President Mike Stanley. Also present were Barry Maister, IOC member from New Zealand, Choi Jong-Jun, secretary general of KOC, and other leading officials.



The agreement between the two NOCs is intended to promote Olympism, friendship and the performance of athletes. In this respect, both parties will actively cooperate with each other in many areas by running joint training camps, exchange programmes for coaches and sharing information for improving athletes' performance. (www.sports.or.kr)



Kuwait

Participants of the executive committee meeting and the general assembly of the Asian Shooting Confederation and participants in the 4th Asian Air Gun Shooting Championship sent on Monday, October 24, a cable of gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his noble auspices of their meeting, reports the Kuwait News Agency.

They also thanked HH the Amir for the warm hospitality they received in their second home, as well as for his endless support of sports activities that increase the bonds of friendship among athletes in the Asian continent.

In the cable, they wished HH the Amir all the best and everlasting health and more prosperity for the State of Kuwait under his wise leadership.

(www.kuna.net.kw)



Kyrgyzstan

Three athletes represented Kyrgyzstan at the sambo World Cup held from October 13-16 in Riga, Latvia, reports the Kabar news agency in Bishkek. Artur Te and Eliman Kasymbaev won gold medals under the head coach of the national combined team, Arthur Son.

The competitions were held among boys and girls born between 1993-1994, as well as juniors born in 1991-1992. Athletes from more than 30 countries took part.

(www.kabar.kg)



Laos

The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, through the National Committee of Sport and Physical Culture, presented a top award to two leading sports officials in South East Asia.

The Prime Minister decreed that the Cross of Labour Medal be awarded to Mr. Chris Chan, Secretary General of the Singapore National Olympic Council, and to Dato' Sieh Kok Chi, Hon. Secretary of the Olympic Council of Malaysia, for their contribution to the success of the 25th SEA Games 2009 in Vientiane. The awards were presented by the Deputy Minister of Education and Sport, H.E. Madam Sengdeuane Lachanthaboun, in Vientiane on September 9, 2011.



Lebanon

The Lebanese Olympic Committee has produced an informative and colourful magazine celebrating the Olympic movement and Olympic Day activities that took place around the country this year.

Lebanon NOC celebrated Olympic Day 2011 in the five provinces – Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Bekaa, North and South – on five different days in June and July. A total of 2,336 people took part, including 123 officials, managers and coaches. Over 13,000 spectators attended the various events.

The festivities involved eight clubs, two sports resorts, three municipalities and two highways, and featured 38 disciplines ranging from Olympic sports to various forms of dance, including folk, hip-hop and classical ballet. The extensive programme included activities for children with diabetes.

The brochure also provides details of all Lebanese athletes at the Olympic Games since 1948, with medal-winners, and at the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore 2010 and at all Winter Olympics. There is also news from WADA and on Olympic Scholarship awards for London 2012.



Macau

Chinese sports official Yang Shu'an, Vice Minister of the General Administration of Sport of China, met with a visiting delegation from Macau at Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, on October 18, according to a report on the Chinese Olympic Committee website. The delegation was led by Alex Vong Iao Lek, President of the Macau Sports Development Board and Vice President of the Sports and Olympic Committee of Macau. The Macau delegation made a special trip to Nanchang to observe the 7th National City Games.

Yang expressed hope that China and Macau – a Special Administrative Region of China - would strengthen ties to help promote sport and contribute towards maintaining the prosperity and stability of Macau. (www.olympic.cn)



Malaysia

The Olympic Council of Malaysia supported the Kuala Lumpur Masters Athletics Association in its community project to donate school uniforms to under-privileged primary school children. A total of 115 children from orphanages as well as poor children from rural schools were identified to receive the donations. Each child received a school uniform, a set of colour pencils, a pencil box and snacks. Around 100 of the children, some of them accompanied by their parents, with their teachers, sponsors and officials of KLMAA attended the presentation ceremony at OCM HQ.

Prior to the presentation, the children visited the OCM Sports Museum and Hall of Fame, where they were shown photographs of sporting heroes, trophies, Games torches, mascots and pins. The aim of the visit was to motivate and encourage the children to participate in sports activities in their schools, for fun, health and friendship. (www.olympic.org.my)



Maldives

Maldives Olympic Committee President Ibrahim Ismail says that a dream of having an Olympic House has become a reality. In a signing ceremony with the Olympic House designer and consultant, Tekton Design, on October 2, Ibrahim Ismail said the MOC had been looking forward to this moment for many years and that they were delighted to have reached this landmark occasion. "We have been waiting for this for a long time and at last we are very happy that we will be having our own Olympic House."

He added that they were designing the building based on how the Olympic Committee could generate income, and that it would help the member associations to develop sport in the country. The building includes a restaurant, cafe, boutique hotels, conference hall and children's auditorium. (www.nocmaldives.org)



Mongolia

Mongolia NOC organised an Olympic Forum in Selenge, Bulgan and Huvsgul provinces, situated 1,200 km from the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Around 300 delegates took part, including teachers, school children and volunteers. Dr. D. Zagdsuren, NOC President, and Mr. Sh. Magvan, IOC Honorary Member, were the main sports dignitaries to attend the Forum.



In addition, volleyball and national wrestling competitions were held, as well as the Olympic Education For All seminar.



Myanmar

NOC Myanmar hosted the 2011 IOC Regional Sports Medicine Course (Intermediate Level) in Yangon, with the assistance of Olympic Solidarity. The opening address was given by U. Thaung Htike, Secretary General of Myanmar Olympic Committee and Director General of the Sport and Physical Education Department of the Ministry of Sport, on behalf of His Excellency U. Tint Hsan, President of Myanmar Olympic Committee and Union Minister for the Ministry of Sport.

Dr. Mani Jegathesan, Chairman of the OCA Medical Committee, greeted the participants on behalf of the IOC, OCA and SEA Games Federation, and congratulated Myanmar on hosting a sports medicine course for the third time.

The two other chief speakers were Dr. Sally Hughson, from the Australian Institute of Sport, who spoke on sports psychology, and Dr. Chanin Lumsum, from NOC Thailand, who focused on the role of arthroscopy in the Anterior Cruciate Ligament.

Other speakers included Prof. Than Toe, Dr. Mya Lay Sein, Prof. Christopher Ah Mg, Dr. Ye Tint Lwin, Dr. Theingi Thwin, Prof. Khin Myo Hla, Prof. Lin Tun Tun and Prof. Nwe Nwe.



Nepal

The President of Nepal Olympic Committee, Mr. Dhruba Bahadur Pradhan, and members of the National Sports Council jointly welcomed and congratulated the medalists of the 1st South Asian Beach Games on their arrival from Sri Lanka at Tribhuvan International Airport. Nepal won eight medals in total: one gold in equestrian, two silver in equestrian and five bronze, two in equestrian, two in beach kabaddi and one in football. (www.nocnepal.org.np)



Oman

Oman finished in fifth place in the final medals table of the first GCC Games (Bahrain 11) from October 11-22 with four gold, three silver and four bronze for a total of 11. All four gold came in athletics, with individual glory for Barakat Mubarak Al-Harthi in the men's 100 metres and Ahmed Mohamed Al-Marjibi in the men's 400 metres. (www.bahrain11.com)

45 NOCs

News and sports round-up



(See Qatar)



Pakistan

Pakistan claimed 11 medals at the inaugural South Asian Beach Games in Hambantota, Sri Lanka, from October 8-14. Pakistan finished third of eight teams in the final medals table, behind India and Sri Lanka, with five gold, two silver and four bronze. (www.srilankaolympic.org)



Palestine

Mr. Dawoud Metwali of Palestine was elected as President of the West Asian Fencing Federation at a meeting in Amman, Jordan. Qatar's Saleh Amer Al-Humaidi was elected Senior Vice President. In other news, Palestine was among 12 nations to compete in the athletics competition of the fourth Arab School Sports Tournament in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in early October. The other teams came from Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan, Jordan and the host kingdom. (www.qatarolympics.org)



Philippines

In a joint cooperation between the Philippine Olympic Committee and Sports Vision Centre, athletes selected for the 26th SEA Games were provided with free eye-testing and other vision-related checks as part of the new Sports Medicine Programme under the leadership of POC President Mr. Jose Cojuangco Jr. The series of Sports Vision Testing was headed by Dr. Charlie Ho, Director of the Sports Vision Institute of the Philippines. A sports enthusiast, Dr. Ho has dedicated his career to innovating, designing and developing sports vision training equipment for use of POC national athletes. He also serves as sports vision trainer of the Philippine Basketball Association and Ateneo de Manila University table tennis varsity team. (www.olympic.ph)



Qatar

His Highness the Heir Apparent Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee, will chair the Qatar 2020 Olympic Games bid. The senior members of the bid committee are HE Shaikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Vice President, HE Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Vice President, and Mrs. Noora Ali Al-Manai, Executive President.

His Highness officially announced the launch of Doha's campaign as an applicant city for the 2020 Olympic and Paralympics Games on August 26. (www.qatarolympics.org)



Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia won the third most medals at the inaugural GCC Games (Bahrain 11) from October 11-22 with 28, behind Kuwait (48) and UAE (31) in total medals won. Saudi Arabia's three gold came in athletics (2) and swimming. The kingdom also collected seven silver and 18 bronze medals. The gold medals were won by: Ahmed Khader Al Muwallad (men's 110m hurdles), Hussain Jamaan Al Hamdah (men's 5,000m) and Loai Tashkandi (men's 200m Individual Medley). (www.bahrain11.com)



Singapore

The Republic's indoor bowlers returned from the Women's World Tenpin Bowling Championships in Hong Kong with three silver medals and a bronze in their treasure chest. It was the best performance by a Singapore bowling team in the history of the event, and the next big test is the SEA Games in Indonesia.

The last time bowling featured at the biennial SEA Games was in 2007 in Korat, Thailand, when the team won three golds. (www.26thseagamesindonesia2011.com/TODAY)



Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka NOC started a new chapter in Asian sports history by hosting the first South Asian Beach Games at Hambantota from October 8-14. The host country finished second of eight teams in the final medals table with nine gold, 10 silver and nine bronze, behind only regional super power India (11-9-7). (www.srilankaolympic.org)



Syria

The Syrian Equestrian Federation organised the three-day National Show Jumping Championships at Bassel al-Assad Equestrian and Shooting Club in Dimas, Damascus Countryside, in early October. The event, which attracted entries from across Syria, included competitions for riders between the ages of eight and 14 and children's competitions, reports the Syrian Arab News Agency. (www.sana.sy)



Chinese Taipei



Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee held its first Athletes' Forum at the National Sports University with a theme of "Celebrate Life with Sport". Approximately 100 participants representing active athletes, Olympi

ans, coaches, academics and sports governing bodies gathered at the forum. The forum was chaired by Thomas W. Tsai, NOC President, and co-chaired by Mr. Chih-hsiung Huang, Chairman of the Athletes' Commission, CTOC.

Mr. Frank Fredericks, Chairman of the IOC Athletes' Commission, and Mrs. Yuko Arakida, Chairwoman of the OCA Athletes' Committee, were present as keynote speakers and guests of honour to share their experiences with the participants. (www.tpenoc.net)



Tajikistan

A soccer team from an orphanage in the Tajik northern city of Khujand received a glamorous prize for winning an international tournament in Sochi, Russia: a five-day visit to London to train with the English Premier League club Arsenal. The children, aged from 11 to 13, enjoyed a master class from the Gunners' Russian star Andrei Arshavin.

The Russian mobile phone company MegaFon financed the trip to London for the Tajik youngsters, who won the competition contested entirely by orphans from Russia, Tajikistan, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. (Asia-Plus/www.news.tj)



Thailand

Mr. Kanokphand Chulakasem, OCA Vice President for the 4th Asian Beach Games in Phuket and Governor of the Sports Authority of Thailand, closed the Olympic Solidarity/OCA Regional Forum in Phuket by assuring the delegates that the event in November 2014 would make all Thai people proud.



"On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport and the Organising Committee of the 4th Asian Beach Games 2014, we have allocated a budget of 670 million Baht (USD 21.6 million) for the staging and promotion of the games," he said.

"There is no doubt that Thailand will host a great and successful Asian Beach Games that will be the pride of all Thai people and Asia."



Timor Leste

Timor Leste's under-23 national football team lost 5-0 against their Indonesian counterparts in a SEA Games warm-up friendly at Stadion Utama Gelora Bung Karno on October 25. Timor Leste will be one of 11 NOCs taking part in the 26th SEA Games at Palembang and Jakarta from November 11-22. (www.26thseagamesindonesia2011.com)



Turkmenistan

The State News Agency of Turkmenistan reports that Turkmen athletes won three medals at the World Alysh Belt Wrestling Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Seven weight categories were contested.

A student of the National Institute for Tourism and Sport, International Master of Sport M. Jumaev from Karabekaul Etrap, won the silver medal in the over 100kg category. International Masters of Sport Ya. Annamuradov (under 62kg) from Bereket Etrap and K. Jumaev (under 90kg) from Sayat took home bronze medals. (www.turkmenistan.gov.tm)



United Arab Emirates

H.E. Saeed Abudl Ghaffar Hussain, Secretary General of the UAE NOC, received at the premises of the NOC H.E. Tuelo Daniel, Secretary General of Botswana NOC. Abdul Ghaffar opened the meeting by welcoming the distinguished guest and the two parties engaged in discussions about the means of stepping up joint cooperation between the UAE NOC and its Botswana counterpart in sports activities and the exchange of technical expertise in the interest of both NOCs. (www.uaenoc.ae)



Uzbekistan

The 12th International Kurash Association Congress was held in Tashkent on October 20, the Uzbekistan National News Agency reports. Association President Komil Yusupov said kurash wrestling was developing rapidly across all continents thanks to the initiative and support of the President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov. Awards included: Best tournament in 2010, President's Grand Prize in Bordeaux; best technique, Abdulla Tangriyev (Uzbekistan); best championship, 4th youth world championship, India; best federation, Indian Kurash Federation; best athletes, Yuma Saeki (Japan) and Anthea Chase (South Africa). (www.uza.uz)



Vietnam

Vietnam is planning to stage the 5th Asian Beach Games in 2016 at Mui Ne resort and the major port city of Da Nang as well as the host city Nha Trang, according to Vietnam Olympic Committee Executive Director Tran Van Manh. Mui Ne Beach lies 200km east of Ho Chi Minh City.



Yemen



Yemen Olympic Committee was represented by Luai Faisal Mohammed Al Sabri at the Chefs de Mission Seminar for the 3rd Asian Beach Games at Haiyang, China, on September 6. She said that Yemen would bring about 15 athletes to the Games next June, in beach handball, 3-on-3 beach basketball and beach volleyball.

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Olympic Solidarity/OCA Regional Forums 2011



Phuket participants have a souvenir photo

ASIAN NOCS READY FOR LONDON 2012

The settings were Dubai and Phuket, but the city on everyone's mind was most definitely London at the Olympic Solidarity/OCA Regional Forums for 2011 held in October.

Representatives from 18 National Olympic Committees in West Asia and Central Asia gathered in Dubai, UAE, for the first two-day forum on October 18-19, before the action moved to Phuket, Thailand, for 27 NOCs from South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia for the second forum on October 21-22.

The theme of this year's Regional Forums was Preparation for the 2012 London Olympics, and the IOC, Olympic Solidarity and London Organising Committee briefed delegates on all the need-to-know information to ensure smooth preparation.

The Dubai forum was opened by UAE NOC Vice President Mohammed Mohammed Fadel Al Hamli on behalf of UAE NOC President HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, while H.E. Sombat Kuruphan, Thailand's Vice Minister of Tourism and Sport, opened the Phuket forum on behalf of the Royal Thai Government.

Summing up the forums, Olympic Solidarity's Asia Manager, Olivier Niamkey, said: "I believe the two forums offered every NOC the chance to keep up to pace with developments regarding the London Olympic Games.

"We tried to create a 'smart-casual' working environment to encourage all NOCs to become involved in the discussions, interact with each other and ask questions face to face.

"I would like to thank the OCA, the NOCs and the two host NOCs for their cooperation in making these forums a success."

2012

Haiyang, China: June 16-22
3rd Asian Beach Games

Macau, China: October 2012
31st OCA General Assembly

2013

Incheon, Korea: June 29- July 6
4th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games

Nanjing, China: August 16-24
2nd Asian Youth Games

2014

Incheon, Korea: September 19- October 4
17th Asian Games

Phuket, Thailand: November 2014
4th Asian Beach Games

2016

Nha Trang, Vietnam (dates to be confirmed)
5th Asian Beach Games

2017

Sapporo, Japan (dates to be confirmed)
8th Asian Winter Games

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (dates to be confirmed)
5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games

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